

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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THE CHEERFUL LETTER.

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HYMN OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.

O fairest-born of love and light,
Yet bending brow and eye severe
On all which pains the holy sight,
Or wounds the pure and perfect ear,—

The generous feeling, pure and warm,
Which owns the rights of all divine,
The pitying heart, the helping arm,
The prompt self-sacrifice, are Thine!

Beneath Thy broad, impartial eye
How fade the lines of caste and birth:—
How equal in their sufferings lie
The groaning multitudes of earth.

Still to a stricken brother true,
Whatever clime hath nurtured him,
As stooped to heal the wounded Jew
The worshipper of Gerizim.

In holy words which cannot die,
In thoughts which angels leaned to know,
Christ gave Thy message from on high,
Thy mission to a world of woe.

That voice's echo hath not died;
From the blue lake of Galilee,
From Tabor's lonely mountain-side,
It calls a struggling world to Thee.
—*Whittier.*

STANZAS ON FREEDOM.

Men! whose boast it is that ye
Come of fathers brave and free,
If there breathe on earth a slave,
Are ye truly free and brave?
If ye do not feel the chain,
When it works a brother's pain,
Are ye not base slaves indeed,
Slaves unworthy to be freed?

Is true Freedom but to break
Fetters for our own dear sake,
And, with leathern hearts, forget
That we owe mankind a debt?
No! true Freedom is to share
All the chains our brothers wear,
And with heart and hand to be
Earnest to make others free!

They are slaves who fear to speak
For the fallen and the weak;
They are slaves who will not choose
Hatred, scoffing, and abuse,
Rather than in silence shrink
From the truth they needs must think;
They are slaves who dare not be
In the right with two or three!

—*James Russell Lowell.*

FORGETTING AND REACHING FORTH.

"Forgetting those things which are behind and reaching forth unto those things which are before."—PAUL'S LETTER TO THE PHILIPPIANS, iii. 13.

The point is this, that the next thing is more important than the last thing; that the best part of our life is never behind us, but always before us.

The past is likely to get more than its due. Absorbed in its joys and sorrows, in

what we have done or left undone, in what might have been but never was, in our good deeds or our misdeeds, our new opportunities and possibilities wait for us in vain. It is not denied that there is a time for looking at the things which are behind, as for every purpose under the sun; but the time should be very short. Life is movement. We never continue in one stay. While we are looking backward we are moving forward,—and at a great disadvantage, because our eyes, and it may be our feet, are turned the other way. Of course, memory has its gracious and its solemn uses, its encouragements and its warnings. There are things which we would not and there are things which we cannot forget. Never fear that memory will not finish the work which is given it to do, and have it out with us; only it must not overdo its work.

The mystery of memory makes our life, not a succession of ever new lives, but one life,—past, present, and to be. The past is sure; it goes with us wherever we go; it is wrought into our new life. We have no need to recall it. What we need as we pass from year to year, from youth to age, from world to world, as the death of one dear friend after another leaves us alone, as one after another of our lifelabors is ended and goes upon the record,—what we need is that forgetfulness of the things which are behind that comes of our hearty reaching forth unto the things which are before. Only as with clear, single-eyed vision we see the things which are before in this world and in worlds to come are we helped and not hindered, gladdened and not pained, by the things which are behind. We forget what it is better to forget, and we remember what it is blessed to remember, as the new life absorbs the old life, and the new hope succeeds to the joy which comes not back again.

Behind some of us are successes, faithful studies, head-work or hand-work well done and well received and well rewarded,—a year of diligence crowned with an abundant harvest, no grievous shortcomings, no haunting mistakes and mortifying failures; a year to be gladly, thankfully remembered. Yet forget it; let the passing moment suffice to recall it; least of all plume yourself upon it and rest comfortably in it. In the strength which you have proved and increased reach forth so earnestly and with such aspirations to the things which are before, that what you have done shall be out of your sight and

out of your mind. What are our grandest successes in comparison with what is not only undone but untried? How many young and old have been stopped midway in life or on its very threshold, and fast-bound ever after in an unambitious mediocrity, by a little success! It would not have been so if they had forgotten the last thing through their grasp upon the next thing. That is a fair beginning, my friend; that was a brave piece of work, and those honors were fairly won,—but what virgin fields, what untouched harvests, what unreclaimed wildernesses stretch out before you!

Behind some of us are failures, losses, trials, disappointments,—things which as we presume to say, not I think without rashness, might have been but were not; yes, things which as we know ought not to have been, and had our hearts been right in the sight of God would not have been. And these things are very exacting. You know how we are tempted to dwell upon our failures, trying perhaps to excuse them, looking into the darknesses which they have made, disheartened by them and demoralized, almost ready to conclude that what is begun wrong must go on wrong; that we must be consistent even in mistakes and mischiefs; that having once lost our head or our temper we must not get it back again; that we must live forever under the shadow of the evil things which are behind us, calling them up afresh from the past for fresh repentances and penances. And this is to sacrifice the possible new life to the old ignorance and death. Rather than be at pains to remember the past, remember to forget it. Study its failures, repent of its sins, grieve over its losses, accept its faithful wounds, listen to its solemn reproofs and warnings, and yet only by the way, and as one whose face is turned towards the rising and increasing brightness, and whose eager hands are reaching forth to grasp the things which are before,—the things which shall not be failures but successes, the things which shall not disappoint us. Look at the last thing, if you have time to look at it at all, in the light of the next thing. If there were no next thing it would not be worth while for us to stay here at all, certainly not to brood upon failures. Jesus did not send the men and women who repented at His word into retreat where they might turn from the light of His countenance and gaze into the waste of past days and years. He said, Go, and sin no more! If at length the Light has

come to you, walk in it, and be a child of it, as living now as once you were dead! But among the things which are behind us, as the year hastens to its close, are scenes of earth and time out of which the sweet light which comes only from the human face has forever faded. We know that it comes not back again,—yes, that with all our sense of loss and poverty we should not dare to ask that it might; and yet we look backward, not forward, at what was once here, at least at the empty seat, at the place of labor from which the laborer has once for all gone: we cannot forget if we would, and we would not if we could. No, we shall not forget! there is no fear of that. The memory of the just and merciful is as abiding as it is blessed and helpful; and yet here also we must try all we can, and with all the help we can get from the God of the living, to lay hold upon the things which are before. Remember the dead, but never as dead,—always as children of God who cannot die. Reach forth and up to that revelation in Christ. Eye hath not seen, ear hath not heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive what it is which God hath prepared for the children of the Resurrection.

The oldest of us are too young, too late comers upon the scene, too much of yesterday, to spend much time in looking back. If we say that we are old, it is but an imagination, a momentary sense of weariness which the sleep which God gives to His beloved (and we are all of us of that number) will soon cure. We are the veriest children,—yes, infants; and what we have done or failed to do is as nothing compared with what remains. And as to our friends who have been with us on earth, we have only as it were lived a day or an hour—nay, a moment—with them. As for the race this world is all before it, so for each one of us there is a life upon whose threshold we still stand, and they who have lived the longest are not yet within the door. Give a day if you will to the past, and then set your faces one and all as they who would go forward and gather in the rich harvests whether of time or of eternity, knowing that on earth or in heaven the reapers are the angels of a faithful God, who is not willing that any should perish.—*Rufus Ellis*.

Oh, do not pray for easy lives. Pray to be stronger men! Do not pray for tasks equal to your powers. Pray for powers equal to your tasks!—*Phillips Brooks*.

FEBRUARY'S GREAT AMERICAN POET.

(JAMES RUSSELL LOWELL, BORN FEB. 22, 1819,
DIED AUG. 12, 1891.)

One hundred years ago this month (February 22), James Russell Lowell was born in Cambridge, Mass. The anniversary will be marked by special observances in many parts of this country, and in England too; for Lowell is regarded by British readers as one of the really great writers of the nineteenth century. During the years (1880–85) while he represented the United States as its Ambassador to Great Britain, the old-world universities of Oxford, Cambridge, and Edinburgh conferred degrees upon him, to mark their respect for his contributions to the world's literature.

The poet's life was lived through times when our own special national problems called for the soundest thinking and the most vigorous speaking. He had a large share in the shaping of public opinion and the directing of public feeling. It is now many years since his "Stanzas on Freedom"—reprinted on our first page—were written, but their splendidly forceful utterance of an eternally true principle makes them as timely in 1919 as they were half a century and more ago.

THE STILL HOUR.

AN OLD SONG FOR OUR NEW TIMES.

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished. . . . O thou that tellest good tidings to Zion, get thee up on a high mountain; O thou that tellest good tidings to Jerusalem, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold the Lord God will come as a mighty one, and his arm will rule for him: behold his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. . . .

How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace, that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation, that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth! The voice of thy watchmen! They lift up the voice,

together do they sing; for they shall see eye to eye, when the Lord returneth to Zion. Break forth into joy, sing together, ye waste places of Jerusalem; for the Lord hath comforted his people, he hath redeemed Jerusalem. The Lord hath made bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations; and all the ends of the earth have seen the salvation of our God.

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek, he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound; to proclaim the year of the favor of the Lord, and the day of vengeance of our God. . . . And they shall build the old wastes, they shall raise up the former desolations, and they shall repair the waste cities.—*The Prophet Isaiah.*

THE FUTURE OF THE CHURCH.

Hear what God, the Lord, hath spoken:—

O my people, faint and few,
Comfortless, afflicted, broken,
Fair abodes I build for you.
Scenes of heartfelt tribulation
Shall no more perplex your ways;
You shall name your walls salvation,
And your gates shall all be praise.

There, like streams that feed the garden,
Pleasures without end shall flow;
For the Lord, your faith rewarding,
All His bounty shall bestow.
Still, in undisturbed possession
Peace and righteousness shall reign;
Never shall you feel oppression,
Hear the voice of war again.

Ye, no more your suns descending,
Waning moons no more shall see;
But, your griefs forever ending,
Find eternal noon in me.
God shall rise, and, shining o'er you,
Change to day the gloom of night.
He, the Lord, shall be your glory,—
God, your everlasting light.

—*Cowper.*

Three men are my friends,—he who loves me, he who hates me, he who is indifferent to me. Who loves me teaches me tenderness; who hates me teaches me caution; he who is indifferent to me teaches me self-reliance.—*Ivan Panin.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass. Tel. Quincy 1140.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book to the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking "Shall I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you have sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed here.

CHANGES OF ADDRESS.

Please note information given to the Book Club by Mrs. E. V. Gregory and Evie Bell.

OFFERS.

1. Several bound copies of *St. Nicholas* and *Our Young Folks* are offered by Miss Decker, 4 Mt. Vernon Street, Salem, Mass.
2. Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 5 Brimmer Street, Boston, Mass., offers "The Making of a Country" by E. E. Hale and "Essentials and Non-Essentials in Religion," "The Problem of the Fourth Gospel" and "Deacon Herbert's Bible Class" by James Freeman Clarke. Ministers will have the first choice.

REQUESTS.

1. Mrs. G. B. Carlton, Boomer, North Carolina, would very much appreciate a cook-book, the *Mother's Magazine*, and any other books or magazines, especially those on child-raising and housekeeping. She is a young mother and housekeeper. She would also enjoy letters from other mothers.
2. I would like for some one to send me books and magazines for myself and for children aged from eleven to three years. We shall appreciate anything you send.—Mrs. D. G. Shaw, Kerr, North Carolina.
3. I want to thank people through the *Cheerful Letter* for the nice reading they have sent me. I have enjoyed the *Ladies Home Journal* very much, and others have enjoyed it, also. I should be glad if some one would send me some books and magazines to read these cold winter days, as I live so far from the railroad or city, and it is so hard to get anything. I should be real glad of a few pieces for patchwork. Miss Pattie Robertson, Route 5, Floyd, Virginia.
4. Mrs. Gusta Jones, Scotland, Arkansas, Box 43, would like to receive good reading for herself, and reading and pictures for her two sons aged ten and seven years.
5. I am a widow fifty-two years old

ing with my brother in the old mountains of Virginia. I should love to receive any mail from the Cheerful Letter sisters. I have no children and live a very lonely life with nothing much to work with. Cassie Rhoades, Route 1, Hiwassee, Virginia.

6. I will write again after a long time and hope to receive books and magazines, and pictures for the small girls. I have one son in training-camp and one daughter in the ninth grade, and she would like papers and fancy-work. Will close, hoping to receive reading for the cold winter nights. Mrs. H. H. Foster, Post, Garzar County, Texas.

7. I enjoy reading and do not have the opportunity to buy books. My husband is away from home a lot and we live in a lonely place. I have been married three years and have no children. I am almost an invalid. I should enjoy any good books and magazines and should like correspondents. My father is dead and we have my mother to care for, as she is old and suffers a lot with rheumatism. I should be glad if some one would send me the *Cheerful Letter*. Would also be glad and thankful for quilt pieces such as silk gingham, calico, and percale. I should be glad if some one would send my mother a Bible in large print. I give you for reference Rev. Lemley Gilbert. My address is Mrs. Kate Hill, Sandy Ridge, Route 1, North Carolina.

8. Will you kindly, at the earliest opportunity, get for me a copy of the "Life of Abraham Lincoln" and a book on English composition, so as to help me on my way to improve the condition among my people? Rothschild Francis, Box 12, St. Thomas, Virgin Islands, U.S.A.

9. I have changed my address from Houston, Arkansas, to Mammoth Springs, Arkansas. I haven't received any books or reading of any kind for fourteen years, only the dear little *Cheerful Letter*. I ask God's blessing on the one who sends it to me these long years. I always know it am not forgotten. Please send me some good reading. Mrs. M. V. Gregory, Mammoth Springs, Arkansas, Wirth Route, Box 17.

10. Mrs. Willis Eanes, Bassetts, Virginia, asks for magazines or story books.

11. I want to thank all that have sent me reading during the year. And please continue the *Cheerful Letter*, as I want it especially. My little girl wishes picture-books and bits of pretty scraps, as she is learning to sew. I shall appreciate *Comfort* if any one can send it, or any kind

of good reading. Mrs. Ada Pace, Athens, Texas, Route 2.

12. I am a widow living in the country, who loves to read and would appreciate either magazines or books, but I am not able to buy or subscribe. Mrs. Ressa G. McAulay, Timber Ridge, Virginia.

13. I have intended writing to tell you how I appreciate the coming of the *Cheerful Letter*. So often in the long years of teaching, the friends of the *Cheerful Letter* sent me books and papers useful in my work with the children; and it was like having an old friend drop in this summer through the few short months my husband was with me. He passed away the 10th of November and left me alone. I am close to the soldiers' reading-room here, and anything sent will be passed on to them, as I presume some will always be stationed here. Mrs. Mary D. Tannehill, 5 Liberty Street, Charleston, South Carolina.

14. Lizzie Tyree, Concord Depot, Virginia, a sixteen-year-old girl with three younger sisters, asks for the *Youth's Companion*, *Ladies' Home Journal*, *Delineator*, or any suitable reading.

15. Jessamine E. Herndon, Granite Springs, Virginia, will appreciate "Miss Billy," "Miss Billy's Decision," and any book on crocheting.

16. Rev. Grover C. Phillips, Bear Creek, North Carolina, asks for "The Preacher's Homiletic Commentary," also "Great Texts of the Bible."

17. Miss J. C. Clark, Stella, Virginia, asks for a dictionary, novels, and picture-books for the children.

18. I will write you to let you know where I am. Hope you all haven't forgotten me, but will see my letter in the *Cheerful Letter* and know where I am. Evie A. Bell, Diball, Angelina County, Texas.

19. Would it be possible to put me in touch with some one who would send me the *Youth's Companion* for my little granddaughter? I have current numbers of the *Saturday Evening Post* which I will send to any one who will pay postage on them. Mrs. Cora A. Hoskinson, 314 East Wheeler Street, Three Rivers, Michigan.

20. A friend gave me a copy of the *Cheerful Letter*, and I think it has got the right name! I have been left a widow with four children and a crippled mother. My husband was killed on the 14th of July, but not in war; he was a Methodist preacher, and was shot one Sunday night at prayer-meeting. My children are all

small. I should admire pictures or books for them. Could some kind lady send my mother bits of scraps to help pass the time? She is confined to her chair. Please send in her own name (Katherine Shell, Athens, Tennessee, Route 8) it would please her so much. I refer you to Rev. F. R. Sherrill, Athens, Tennessee, Route 8. Mrs. Nettie McCracken, Athens, Tennessee, Route 8.

21. I have often thought I would write but it seemed like I never could pick up courage enough. I live among the lonely hills, eight miles from the railroad. I am a young widow. My husband and his brother both got killed on the 14th of July. My husband and I had been married only one week. I should appreciate reading matter. I am very fond of the *Ladies' Home Journal* and the *Woman's Home Companion*. I should greatly appreciate a Testament,—either a small or large one. I refer you to Rev. F. R. Sherrill, Route 8, Athens, Tennessee. Mrs. Bob McCracken, Route 8, Athens, Tennessee.

22. I like the *Cheerful Letter*. I read it all, and try to find out the puzzles. I live with my son at the north side of Powder River, fifteen miles from Arvada. We have no near neighbors; sometimes it is two months that I do not see a woman. I shall be seventy-seven in June. I can do all kinds of housework and I make blocks for quilts. I have had the *Cheerful Letter* a long time. I had a kind friend who lived in Cambridge,—a Mrs. Fuller,—but she moved to New York City. She sent me many good and interesting books. We are having nice weather; New Year's day was very cold, thirty below zero. Mrs. Sarah A. Rose, Arvada, Wyoming.

LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY.

On the twelfth of February, the anniversary of Lincoln's birthday will be remembered, not alone in our country, but in every civilized country of the world. There is not a land under the sun where his name is not known and honored as a great leader who stood for Right and Truth and for plain, honest Justice in the dealings of man with man.

One of his last public utterances was the address he made on the occasion of his second inauguration, in 1865. Really great thoughts, put into strong and simple words, have an immortality of their own. They seem always to apply themselves to the

time when they are quoted. So the closing words of that address of Lincoln's sound as if written for us at this present moment:—

"With malice toward none; with charity for all; with firmness in the right, as God gives us to see the right; let us strive on to finish the work we are in,—to bind up the nation's wounds; to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan; to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

THE "REAL MOTHER."

A young mother recently related an occurrence to me which had repeated itself on several occasions in her home and which she had found most trying. She said: "My children go and get their clean stockings, and tie knots in them in connection with a game they play, and often when I start to dress the children I can't find a single stocking that hasn't been tied tight several times. One hot summer afternoon, I lost patience. 'Anne,' I exclaimed to the eldest, 'why do you cause me such annoyance, day after day?' 'What are mothers for?' she asked, and I saw that she was right."

I gravely asked this thoughtless mother 'if it would not have been better for Anne to aid in the task of untying the stockings, being led, by sharing the toil, to feel grateful for the many times her mother's patient hands had done it for her.

"Oh, she couldn't untie them," she answered, with a shake of her head.

"Had she tried, and found it impossible, she might, of her own accord, have stopped knotting the stockings," I replied.

"But I wanted to take the children to pay a visit, and there wasn't time enough to let her try!"

"Then oughtn't she to have forfeited the pleasure of going with you?"

She stared aghast; then, with a pitying look, burst out: "It's easy to see that you are not a mother! No mother could do that—her mother-heart would not let her."

I was silent for a moment, then, remembering that physical and spiritual motherhood are not necessarily embodied in the same person, explained without impatience the effect such indulgence would have on the child, and pointed out that the most loving mother takes as great pains to train

her children's characters as to provide for their bodily wants, and that the greatest love is that which is most far-seeing. But to the end the mother stoutly held to her conception of the "mother-heart"!

"Nora," complained a mother to her sister, a kindergartner, "your namesake spoils all of our rides in the new car. Will you break her of it?"

"Leave her at home until she shows that she understands that she should not spoil the enjoyment of others," advised the aunt. But this the mother would not do, and the miserable rides continued.

Later the mother went on a visit and the aunt was left in charge of her refractory niece. I saw her riding in the automobile several times without the offender. Then one day the small figure sat in its usual place and in the aunt's arms was the two-year-old brother. They called at the door. "Are you having a pleasant outing?" I asked little Nora. "Yes," she beamed. "I used to spoil our rides; now I'm showing little brother how to make everybody have a good time."

"We had to go without Nora for a few days," remarked the aunt, quietly, "but now she is trying to think of others as well as of herself."—*Harriet Frances Carpenter, in the Christian Register.*

It is quite possible that readers of the *Cheerful Letter* may differ in opinion as to the author's judgment. How would a "real mother-heart" feel about it? The editor would be glad to have letters about the matter.

SOME OF WASHINGTON'S SAYINGS.

(GEORGE WASHINGTON, BORN FEB. 22, 1732;
DIED DEC. 14, 1799.)

Let us, as a nation, be just; let us fulfil the public contracts.

I hope some day we shall become a store-house and granary for the world.

The very idea of the power and the right of the people to establish government presupposes the duty of every individual to obey the established government.

No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of it for another.—*Charles Dickens.*

NATURAL HISTORY.

SNIP.

To win the confidence of a dog is always a pastime worth the effort, and Snip is one of my friends thus gained. I came across him at a railway station where I was waiting for my train, and presently his master joined in our one-sided conversation.

"You like dogs, Madam?"

"Very much. Mine at home is not as unapproachable as this one."

"Snip's business makes him suspicious. You see I walk the tracks here nights and Snip walks too. I feel secure with him, he is so faithful and such a treasure. Money wouldn't buy him. He saved my life once, or at least an arm, and lost a piece of his own tail—see?"

"How did it happen? Although I cannot persuade Snip to wag his tail, he looks at me kindly as if he expected you to tell me."

"Yes, he is taking it all in. You do know dogs pretty well. Well, it was that terrible stormy time in February a year ago last winter. Remember?

"The wind blew a gale and after a while the snow turned to rain and, freezing as it fell, turned the whole world into an iceberg. It was impossible to keep the tracks clear; the telegraph wires were down and we knew not what to expect. I tried to make Snip stay inside by the fire but he insisted in following every time I made my way through the yard.

"The midnight express was late, and although I had been looking for it any minute it came upon me unawares and to save my wits I couldn't tell which track I was on. I sprang for the platform, slipped, and fell with one arm across the rail.

"I was stunned by the fall, but Snip had kept his wits, and seizing my arm drew it back above my head, and the train went by almost brushing my clothes and snipping two or three inches off Snip's tail. Yes, it was awful, and gives an uncanny feeling that many railroad men have, as if they belonged to both worlds."

"You are a hero, Snip, and your master is another," I said, as I boarded my train, and Snip condescended to wag his tail. Whenever I pass the station I look for the pair, and am always recognized by them both.—*Annie A. Preston.*

ROBIN TO THE RESCUE.

One winter, just after a snow-storm, a bevy of snow-birds appeared near my house. I fed them crumbs, and they

stayed with us several days. They got a little bold, even coming up to the kitchen steps to get their rations. There was, however, one exception.

A fence separated the old apple orchard from the house-lot, and I observed that one bird kept on the fence-rail, never venturing nearer to the feeding-place. To my surprise and delight, the reason of it was soon made plain.

The poor little fellow was lame of one wing; so he must not be too bold, as, in the event of danger, he must have some vantage for escape. So an old bird took him crumbs at every feeding-time.

But the most remarkable act in my knowledge of a bird in sympathy with another in distress was performed by a robin not two hundred yards from my house. It was a deed of daring, and in the highest degree heroic.

A sparrow-hawk had pounced on a sparrow in the street, and was bearing it away. A robin from his maple tree witnessed the act, and instantly started in pursuit.

High in the air the noble little fellow caught up with the buccaneer, and one could hear the short, jerky cries of the hawk as the robin was "pegging in" and making the feathers fly.

The hawk dropped his prey, and the robin returned to the maple tree, where he had left his mate. The sparrow made the best of time to get back to his kind.

Was not that nobly done for the robin—so brave and so magnanimous, too?—*Samuel Lockwood.*

CHILDREN'S CLASSICS.

KING ARTHUR AND THE KNIGHTS OF THE ROUND TABLE.

(Continued.)

These stories of an ancient hero-king of Britain were for many centuries told and retold without being written down. Then, between four and five hundred years ago, Sir Thomas Malory made a book of the familiar tales. The quaint, old-fashioned language of the stories gives them an added charm.

All the knights who sat about the great Round Table of King Arthur made their vows unto God that they would be true and loyal to the king, and likewise that they would at all times stand ready to befriend and defend any one who was wronged,—especially that they would protect every fair lady who might be in peril. And of all those knights who vowed his life to that service, the one most famed for valor and strength was Sir Launce-

lot of the Lake; to him befell many strange adventures.

One day Sir Launcelot said to his brother, Sir Lionel, "Let us make ready and ride away to seek what new adventures may be ours." "With all my heart," quoth his brother; and when the sun rose they both put on their armor and rode from the king's court out into the deep forest. When they had passed through the forest, they came into a great, open plain, where the sun was hot at noon-day; and Sir Launcelot had much desire for sleep. They espied a great apple-tree and Sir Lionel said: "Brother, yonder is a fair shadow. There may we rest us and our horses."

"It is well said, good brother," answered Sir Launcelot, "for in seven years I have not felt the need for sleep as now." So they alighted and tied their horses, and Sir Launcelot laid him down under the apple-tree, and was soon fast asleep. But Sir Lionel was awake.

And while they rested there, behold, there came riding hard across the plain three knights, fleeing as fast as their steeds could bear them, and one knight pursuing the three. Then he overtook, and smote most cruelly, overthrowing all the three, and binding each man as a captive with his own bridle-reins. When Sir Lionel saw this, he mounted and would have rescued the prisoners from the hands of one he perceived to be evil. But the strange knight was stronger than Sir Lionel and made him also a captive, and wounded him sore, and bound him with his own reins. Then the strange knight took all four captives away, and cast them into a dark and dismal dungeon in his own castle, where they found many others, all most cruelly treated.

When Sir Launcelot awoke, and found not his brother beside him, he knew not which way to go; but he mounted his horse and rode into another dark forest at the side of the plain. And, as he rode, he met a fair damsel riding on a white palfrey, and they saluted each other.

"Fair damsel," said Sir Launcelot, "know ye in this country any adventures?"

"Sir knight," replied the damsel, "there be many adventures now near at hand, if thou durst undertake them."

"For that cause indeed am I come hither," declared Sir Launcelot.

"Sir, thou dost indeed seem like one ready and valiant. Know, then, that a knight, strong but most evil of heart, dwells not far away. His name is Sir

Turquiné. I am told he hath now in his prison many good knights of King Arthur's court, that he hath overcome with his own hands, for, indeed, he is a man of mighty strength, and good at the sword and the spear. If ye will, there is an honest forester close by, who can show you the way to that dismal stronghold."

They presently found the forester, and asked him the way to the castle of the wicked Sir Turquine.

"Sir, and fair lady," said the forester, "this country know I well. Within a mile is the strong castle of that most evil lord. Below the castle wall there is a stream with a ford, where horses may drink the clear water. Beside the ford grows a great tree, and on the tree hang shields that once belonged to good knights and true who now do languish in the castle dungeon. There on the tree hangs also a basin of copper. Strike thrice upon the basin with the butt of thy spear, and thou shalt find thine adventure quickly opening before thee."

So Sir Launcelot and the damsel rode to the ford, and saw the tree where hung the shields of many captive knights. And there hung also the basin of copper as the forester had said. And Sir Launcelot beat with the butt of his spear upon the basin, making a loud noise.

All at once was he aware of a very tall, heavy knight, that came riding from afar toward the ford; and he was driving before him another horse, on which lay bound an armed man, sore wounded, and bleeding.

"Now, fair damsel" quoth Sir Launcelot, "I see yonder a captive knight who is a fellow of mine own. Take you secret shelter behind yonder thicket of bushes; for I promise you, by the help of God, to rescue him, and it may be a right hard struggle lieth between me and his surly captor. As for that rider himself, unless he be a better man in the saddle than I and a steadier with the spear, I hope to overthrow him utterly, and set free those others whom he hath injured before this day."

When Sir Turquine, the wicked one, drew near the ford, Sir Launcelot spake out boldly: "Put down that wounded man, sir knight, and give account of thine evil doings. Thou hast wrought shame on the knights of the Table Round. I am come, for their sake, to prove my strength against thee. Defend thyself then, if thou art able."

"And if thou be of the Table Round,"

cried Sir Turquine, "I defy thee and all thy fellowship."

"That is overmuch for a man like thee to say," answered Sir Launcelot. And the two rode fast to each other, and smote each other so heavily with their spears, in the midst of their shields, that their two horses were overthrown.

Then they left their horses, and, holding their shields before them, seized their swords and came together eagerly. And so they fought for the space of two hours. Then, when they stood breathless, leaning on their swords, Sir Turquine said: "Thou art the biggest man I ever met withal, and the best. If so be thou art not the one knight whom I hate above all others, I will indeed deliver unto thee all my captives."

"Who is he whom thou hatest above all others?" demanded Sir Launcelot.

"He is called Sir Launcelot of the Lake."

"Then know, thou evil knight, he who now stands before thee is himself Sir Launcelot of the Lake, son of Ban of Berwick, and knight of the Round Table of our lord the King. Now thou shalt give up thy captives whether thou wilt or no!" And, so saying, Sir Launcelot began the combat anew, and they fought again until evil Sir Turquine was slain and lay upon the ground by the ford. And then Sir Launcelot beat again upon the basin of copper; and the castle gates were opened, and he went in; for none durst oppose him who had slain in a fair fight Sir Turquine, the castle's master. And by Sir Launcelot were set free every good knight and true that had languished in the dismal dungeon of the castle.

After that, Sir Launcelot rode away once more, passing through many strange countries, and very poorly did he fare. But at length, one night, he came to a manor house where gracious gentlefolk received him kindly and set forth good cheer both for him and for his horse. Sir Launcelot was lodged in a room over the gate. There he unarmed him, and lay down to sleep with his sword near at hand.

Soon after, he was awakened by the noise of someone knocking in haste at the gate.—*Adapted from Lanier's version.*

(To be continued.)

Courage for the great sorrows of life and patience for the small ones; then, when you have accomplished your daily task, go to sleep in peace. God is awake!
—Victor Hugo.

DAVID ELGINBROD'S PRAYER.

O Thou who holds the stars alight, and our own souls shining with light above that of the stars, grant that they may shine before Thee as the stars, for ever and ever. And as Thou holdest the stars shining through the long night, when there is no man to see, so hold Thou the light burning in our souls while we see neither Thee nor it, but lie buried in sleep and forgetfulness. Be Thou by us, even as a mother sits by the bedside of her child; only be Thou nearer to us, even in our very souls; and watch over the world of dreams that they make for themselves. Grant that more and more thoughts of Thy thinking may come into our hearts day by day, so that at last there may be an open road between Thee and us, and Thy angels may ascend and descend upon us; so may we be in Thy heaven even while we are on Thy earth. Amen.—*George Macdonald.*

WHAT OUR BUSINESS WORLD NEEDS.

Good character is always the most valuable asset of any boy or girl who looks out upon the world with wonder, longing, and a little fear. Every wide-awake youth wants to find a place among the world's workers, but he seldom takes in the very important fact that there is a place ready and waiting for the youth who is qualified. Every employer of labor is anxiously scanning the labor market, eager to discover and set to profitable work the few who are above all others prepared to work, honestly, skilfully, and faithfully. Not only are intelligent employers waiting for those who are industrially fit, but all society is prepared to give such well-set-up young men and women places, incomes, and promotion.

If such simple facts as these were understood and accepted, the strife that now agitates a part of the labor world would be followed by silence, while everybody would set about the business of making himself fit to be selected. Employers of labor would be compelled to offer work and opportunity to the worthy sons of toil, and outside the employers' world new and better opportunities would open on every hand.

The loudest outcries come from the people who are disappointed because they claim the fruits of industry and good char-

acter without giving adequate returns in service and trained ability. They would gather grapes from thorns and figs from thistles, and then wonder why a heartless world was so selfish and unsympathetic. Let the employers' associations and the labor organizations lift up the same banners and agree to make good character the most desirable product of culture, and half the needless strife would instantly cease and a new era of progress would set in.—*The Christian Register.*

LOWELL'S TRIBUTE TO LINCOLN

Forgive me, if from present things I turn
To speak what in my heart will beat and burn,

And hang my wreath on his world-honored urn.

Nature, they say, doth dote,
And cannot make a man
Save on some worn-out plan,
Repeating us by rote:

For him her Old World moulds aside she threw,

And, choosing sweet clay from the breast
Of the unexhausted West,
With stuff untainted shaped a hero new,
Wise, steadfast in the strength of God, and true.

How beautiful to see
Once more a shepherd of mankind indeed!
Who loved his charge, but never loved to lead;

One whose meek flock the people joyed to be,

Not lured by any cheat of birth,
But by his clear-grained human worth,
And brave old wisdom of sincerity!

They knew that outward grace is dust;
They could not choose but trust
In that sure-footed mind's unfaltering skill

And supple-tempered will
That bent like perfect steel to spring again
and thrust.

His was no lonely mountain-peak or mind,

Thrusting to thin air o'er our cloudy bars,

A sea-mark now, now lost in vapor blind;

Broad prairie rather, genial, level-lined
Fruitful and friendly for all human kind
Yet also nigh to Heaven and loved of loftiest stars.

Nothing of Europe here,
Or, then, of Europe fronting mornward still,

Ere any names of Serf and Peer
Could Nature's equal scheme deface;
Here was a type of the true elder race,
And one of Plutarch's men talked with
face to face.

I praise him not; it were too late;

And some innate weakness there must be
 In him who condescends to victory
 Such as the Present gives, and cannot wait,
 Safe in himself as in a fate.

So always firmly he:
 He knew to bide his time,
 And can his fame abide,
 Still patient in his simple faith sublime,
 Till the wise years decide.

Great captains, with their guns and
 drums,
 Disturb our judgment for the hour,
 But at last silence comes;

These all are gone, and, standing like a
 tower,

Our children shall behold his fame,
 The kindly-earnest, brave, foreseeing
 man,

Bagacious, patient, dreading praise, not
 blame,

New birth of our new soil, the first
 American.

THE AMUSEMENT COLUMN.

[Address everything relating to the
 Amusement Column to Mr. Henry A.
 Enks, 238 Willow Avenue, West Somer-
 ville, Mass. Contributors are requested to
 write on one side of the paper only. Write
 name and address plainly (not necessarily
 for publication) and send the answers to
 the puzzles on a separate slip of paper.]

I.

CURTAILINGS.

1. Curtail a word meaning a kitchen veg-
 etable, and leave a four-winged insect.

2. Curtail a word meaning a piece of
 astebord with a person's name, and leave
 vehicle.

3. Curtail a word meaning the name of
 many small shrubs with beautiful flowers,
 and leave to make hot.

4. Curtail a word meaning sound, and
 leave a weight.

5. Curtail a word meaning to drink hard,
 and leave a child's toy.

II.

DOUBLE CROSS-WORD ENIGMA.

In willow, but not in oak.
 In gladioli, but not in pink.
 In shanty, but not in hut.
 In hamstring, but not in tendon.
 In inferior, but not in high.
 In near, but not in far.
 In gaol, but not in prison.
 In toll, but not in penny.
 In tooth, but not in eyes.
 In now, but not in time.
 My *whole* is the name of two persons
 orn in February.

III.

CANNED GOODS.

1. A can that is an English cathedral.
2. A can that is a fabricated story.
3. A can that is frank and sincere.
4. A can that is a rule of the church.
5. A can that is a little boat.
6. A can that is a bird.
7. A can that gives light.

—Exchange.

IV.

ADDITIONS.

1. Add five hundred to a pronoun and
 make a word meaning a drove.
2. Add five to a word meaning to hasten
 and make a word meaning the home of
 bees.
3. Add five hundred to white with age
 and make a word meaning to store secretly.
4. Add fifty to the fluid which we breathe
 and make the resting place of a wild beast.
5. Add one hundred to the whole number
 or quantity of and make to invite.

V.

HALF-SQUARE.

1. A city in France.
2. A girl's name.
3. A preposition.
4. A consonant.

In the December, 1918, number the dia-
 gram under the "King's Move Puzzle"
 should have been placed under the "Laby-
 rinth of Letters" in "*Answers to puzzles in
 the November number*" and vice versa.

Answers to puzzles in the January number.

I. In WAR-WORN FRANCE: 1. Nancy.
 2. Chantilly. 3. Château-Thierry. 4. Laon.
 5. Bordeaux. 6. Neufchâtel. 7. Marseilles.

II. PECULIAR ARITHMETIC: Happy New
 Year.

III. A DIAMOND:

P
 PEA
 PEACE
 ACE
 E

IV. TWISTED BOOKS: 1. Uncle Tom's
 Cabin. 2. Little Women. 3. Cab and Ca-
 boose. 4. Kidnapped.

V. BROKEN WORDS: Peri-style; stag-
 nation; do-nation; son-net; pass-age;
 penny-royal; post-master; car-pet.

VI. CROSS-WORD ENIGMA: Peace.

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE

Chairman of the Cheerful Letter Exchange, Mrs. Hubert Pope, 39 Kenneth Street, West Roxbury, Mass.

Editor of The Cheerful Letter, Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 5 Brimmer St., Boston, Mass.

Book Club Secretary, Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

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